

CATALYTIC HYDROGENATION OF CO<sub>2</sub> OVER  
Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 CATALYSTS FOR PRODUCTION OF  
METHANOL

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2016

**CATALYTIC HYDROGENATION OF CO<sub>2</sub> OVER Cu/ZnO/SBA-15  
CATALYSTS FOR PRODUCTION OF METHANOL**

**by**

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement  
for the degree of  
Master of Science**

**FEBRUARY 2016**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First of all, I would like to thank to Allah the Almighty for the strength, guidance and blessing for me to complete this study. I am grateful to my supervisors, Prof. Dr. Abdul Rahman bin Mohamed for the guidance and support throughout the studies. His great supervision teach me a lot of things not just about the research but also trained me to be a better person.

Thanks also to my family member especially my father, Mr Asri bin Halus for all the support and pray. The motivation from him was the catalyst for me to complete my studies.

I also would like to thank to all the laboratory technicians and administrative staffs in the School of Chemical Engineering who have provide their help, particularly Mrs Nurul Hidayah, Mr Arif, Mr Syamsul Hidayat, Mr Roqib, and Mr Ismail.

I also grateful to all my friend here is USM especially to my friend under the same supervision of Prof. Rahman particularly Mrs Meikee, Mr Nizam, Mrs Husna, Mr Sebastian and Mr Wong. Their existence make me more motivated to my study.

Lastly, I would like to thank to Ministry of Higher Education for the financial support through MyBrain 15. My appreciation also to Long term research grant scheme (LRGS) (203/PJKIMIA/6720009) grant for funding the allowance and research materials.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BET	Bruanuer-Emmet-Teller
BJH	Barrett,Joyner and Halenda
EDX	Energy dispersed X-ray
GC	Gas chromatography
GHGs	Greenhouse gases
GHSV	Gas hourly space velocity
GWP	Global warming potential
P	Pressure
P123	Triblock copolymer poly(ethylene glycol)-poly(propylene glycol)- poly(ethylene glycol)
RWGS	Reverse water gas shift
SBA-15	Santa Barbara Amorphous
SEM	Scanning electron microscopy
t	Time
TEM	Transmission Electron microscopy
TEOS	Tetraethyl orthosilicate
TGA	Thermogravimetric analysis

## LIST OF SYMBOLS

%	Percentage
$\mu\text{m}$	Micrometer
Au	Aurum
C	Carbon
Ce	Cerium
$\text{CH}_3\text{OH}$	Methanol
$\text{CH}_4$	Methane
CO	Carbon monoxide
$\text{CO}_2$	Carbon dioxide
Cr	Chromium
Cu	Copper
$\text{CuO}$	Copper oxide
Ea	Activation Energy
Fe	Iron
Ga	Gallium
$\text{Ga}_2\text{O}_3$	Gallium oxide
h	Hour
H	Hydrogen atom
$\text{H}_2$	Hydrogen gas
k	Rate constant
K	Degree Kelvin
kg	Kilogram
kJ	Kilo joule

m	Magnesium
Mn	Mangan
MPa	Mega pascal
N <sub>2</sub>	Nitrogen gas
N <sub>2</sub> O	Nitrous oxide
Na <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub>	Sodium carbonate
nm	Nanometer
Pd	Palladium
R	Ideal gas law constant
wt. %	Weight percentage
Zn	Zinc
ZnO	Zinc oxide
ZrO <sub>2</sub>	Zirconium Oxide

# **PENGHIDROGENAN CO<sub>2</sub> BERMANGKIN MENGGUNAKAN MANGKIN Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 UNTUK PENGHASILAN METHANOL**

## **ABSTRAK**

Isu-isu pemanasan global telah menjadi kebimbangan utama di seluruh dunia. Punca utama pemanasan global adalah disebabkan oleh jumlah gas rumah hijau yang semakin meningkat di atmosfera terutamanya gas karbon dioksida (CO<sub>2</sub>). Penghasilan metanol dari CO<sub>2</sub> dianggap sebagai alternatif kepada kaedah pemencilan CO<sub>2</sub> secara geologi dan lautan yang mahal. Pemangkin Cu/ZnO dilaporkan menjadi aktif untuk pengeluaran metanol dari penghidrogenan CO<sub>2</sub>. Untuk kajian ini, objektif utama adalah untuk menghasilkan mangkin Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 beraktiviti tinggi untuk penghidrogenan CO<sub>2</sub> bagi penghasilan metanol. SBA-15 telah disintesis menggunakan kaedah konvensional tanpa melalui langkah hidroterma dan logam Cu/ZnO telah dimuatkan pada sokongan menggunakan kaedah pemendapan bersama. Pencirian telah dijalankan ke atas SBA-15 dan pemangkin disintesis Cu / ZnO / SBA-15. SBA-15 yang disediakan mempunyai morfologi seperti serat dengan luas permukaan BET, luas liang micro, luas liang meso dan isipadu liang 716,98 m<sup>2</sup>/g, 188,32 m<sup>2</sup>/g, 528 m<sup>2</sup>/g dan 0.70 cm<sup>3</sup>/g. Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 dengan pada nisbah Cu: ZnO: SBA-15 3: 4: 6 (23.1% berat Cu) telah dipilih sebagai pemangkin terbaik untuk kajian ini dan digunakan untuk kajian proses. Keadaan reaksi terbaik adalah pada jumlah halaju gas setiap jam (GHSV) 3600 h<sup>-1</sup>, suhu 543 K dan tekanan 5.0 MPa dengan penukaran CO<sub>2</sub> pada 22% dengan hasil metanol 17.0%. Tenaga pengaktifan bagi pengeluaran metanol dari penghidrogenan CO<sub>2</sub> telah ditentukan daripada Arrhenius plot dan tenaga pengaktifan yang dianggarkan adalah 43 kJ / mol.



# **CATALYTIC HYDROGENATION OF CO<sub>2</sub> OVER Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 CATALYSTS FOR PRODUCTION OF METHANOL**

## **ABSTRACT**

Global warming issues had been widely become main concern worldwide. The main cause of the global warming is due to increasing amount of the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere especially carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) gas. The production of methanol from CO<sub>2</sub> considered as the alternative to the costly geological and oceanic CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration. Cu/ZnO based catalyst had been reported to be active for the production of the methanol from CO<sub>2</sub> hydrogenation. For this study, the main objective was to synthesized high activity of Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 for hydrogenation of CO<sub>2</sub> to produce methanol. SBA-15 support was synthesized using conventional method without the hydrothermal aging and the Cu/ZnO metal was loaded on the support using deposition co-precipitation method. The characterizations been carried out on the synthesized SBA-15 and catalyst Cu/ZnO/SBA-15. The prepared SBA-15 having fibre like morphology with BET surface area, micropore area, mesopore area and pore volume of 716.98 m<sup>2</sup>/g, 188.32 m<sup>2</sup>/g, 528 m<sup>2</sup>/g and 0.70 cm<sup>3</sup>/g, respectively. The Cu/ZnO/SBA-15 with Cu:ZnO:SBA-15 ratio 3:4:6 (23.1 wt% Cu) was selected as the best catalyst for this studies and used for the process studies. The best reaction condition was at total gas hourly space velocity (GHSV) of 3600 h<sup>-1</sup>, temperature 543 K and pressure 5.0 MPa with conversion of CO<sub>2</sub> at 22% with methanol yield of 17.0%. The activation energy for the production of methanol from CO<sub>2</sub> hydrogenation was determined from Arrhenius plot and the estimated activation energy was 43 kJ/mol.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 World climate**

##### **1.1.1 Global warming**

One of the phenomena that become a great concern worldwide nowadays is global warming. Basically, global warming has been occurring over the past 15000 years on earth. It can be described as a struggle between human progress and nature. Researchers declared that the earth average temperature had been increased 0.4-0.8 °C and it is predicted that this temperature will increase up to 1.4-5.8 °C over next hundred years (IPCC, 2007).

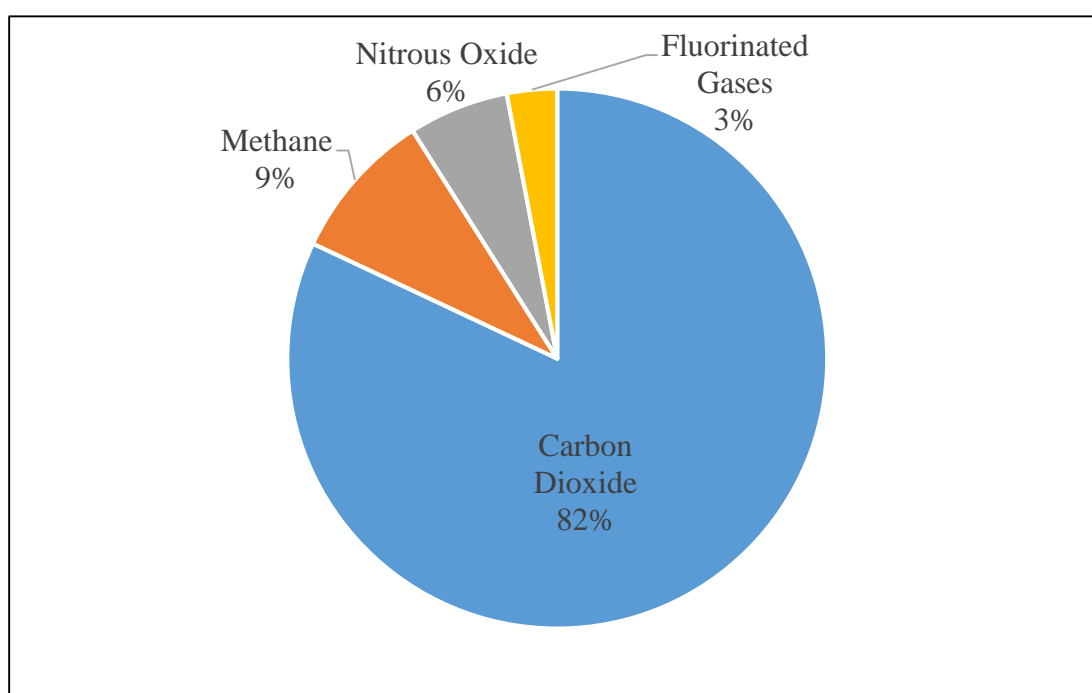
The impacts of global warming include accelerated rising of the sea level that leads to flooding, ice melting in the arctic, severe droughts on certain area, longer wildfire that cause more damage to the environment, and health issues (EPA, 2013). The build-up effect from the global warming could alter earth ecological systems that lead to drastic consequences for the world biodiversity including the human race.

Global warming is also referred as the greenhouse effect. This process occurs when the greenhouse gases (CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, NO<sub>3</sub>, and halogenated gas) are released into the atmosphere from worldwide activities. These gases are capable of absorbing the infrared radiation. The visible shortwave light from the sun to the earth, passing through the greenhouse gases and the infrared radiation reflects off from the earth's surface towards space and some of it being trapped by the greenhouse gases and

reflected back downwards. The concentration of these gases in the atmosphere keep increasing, trapping heat in the atmosphere, and hence lead to the increasing of average earth temperature.

### 1.1.2 Greenhouse gases

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA, 2014), the largest constituent of the greenhouse gases is CO<sub>2</sub> which is around 82% as shown in **Figure 1.1**. Other greenhouse gases are methane 9%, nitrous oxide 6% and fluorine-containing halogenated substances (HFCs, PFCs, and SF<sub>6</sub>) 3%.

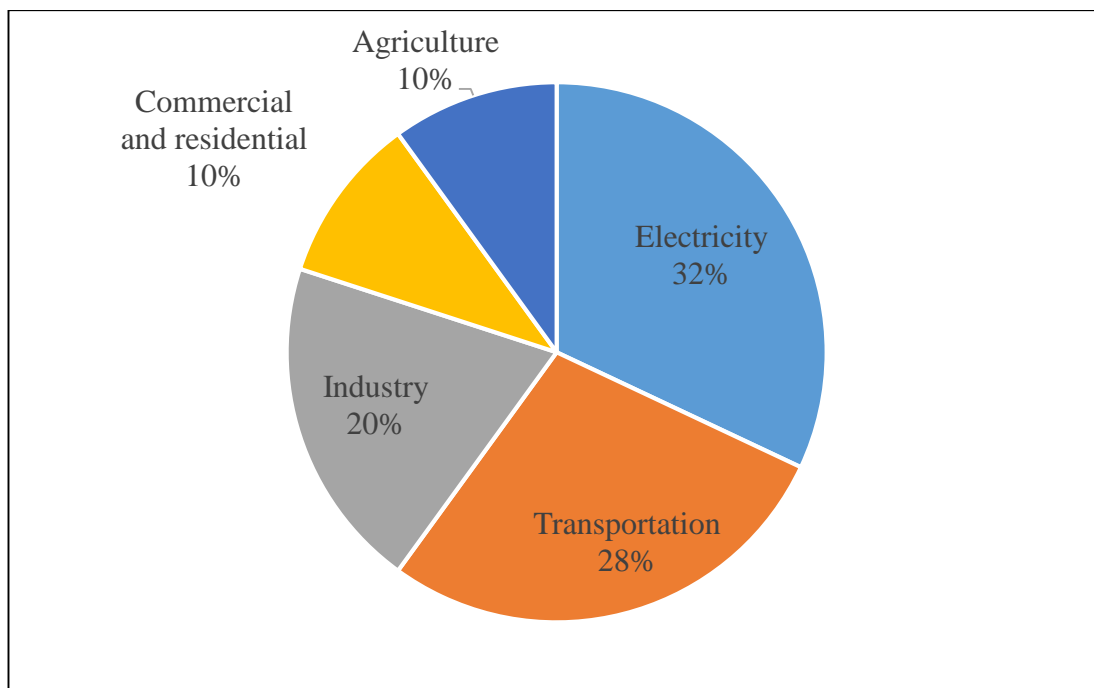


**Figure 1.1:** Greenhouses gases by emission: Source (EPA 2014)

There are three major properties of greenhouse gases that are considered when evaluating their relative impacts towards global warming and they are the concentration of gases in the atmosphere that reflect on the amount of heat retain in

the atmosphere, the duration to stay in atmosphere that determine their availability to absorb heat and release to the atmosphere, and also their global warming potential (GWP). Global warming potential reflect on how strongly do the gases impact global temperature and is a measured of the total energy that a gas absorbs over a particular period of time (usually 100 years), compared to CO<sub>2</sub> (Forster et al. 2007). According to these factors, CO<sub>2</sub> is considered to have a big impact since it is abundance in the atmosphere and been able to stay there up to thousands of years. Although methane having GWP 21 times higher than CO<sub>2</sub>, the amount of CH<sub>4</sub> is much lower and the ability to stay in the atmosphere is only about 10 years.

Greenhouse gases has been emitted to the atmosphere from various human activities as shown in **Figure 1.2**. Over the last 150 years, the concentrations of the greenhouse gases keep increasing. Fossil fuel combustion (coal and natural gases), for providing electricity and transportation, is the major source of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere. In industry, greenhouse gases are emitted from certain chemical reactions for the production of new products. Other source of greenhouse gases includes commercial, residential and agriculture activities.



**Figure 1.2:** Total greenhouse gases emission in US. Source (Inventory of U.S Greenhouse Gas Emission and sink, 1990-2012)

## 1.2 Carbon Dioxide

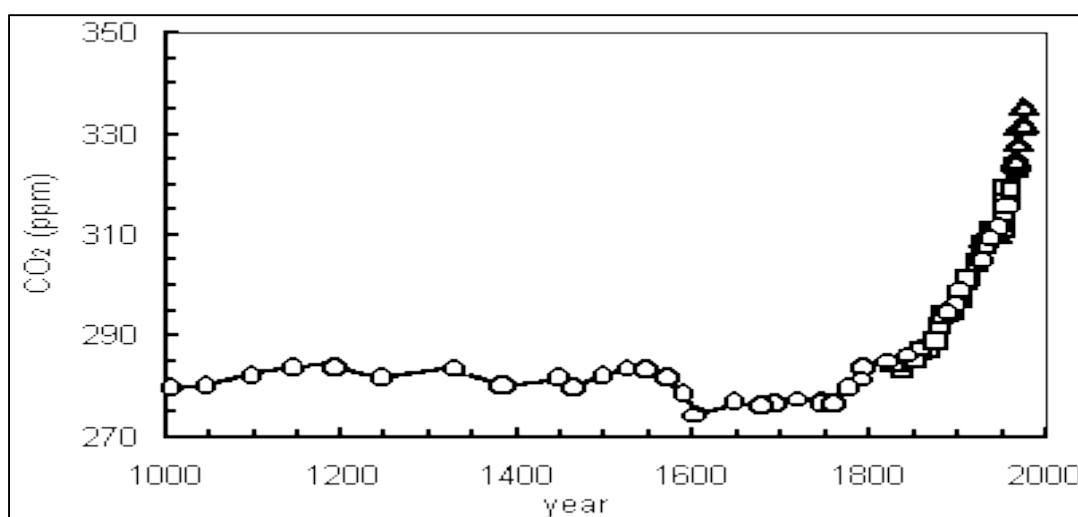
### 1.2.1 CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

CO<sub>2</sub> is the main gas for the greenhouses gases produced from various human activities that led to climate change and increase in worldwide temperature. In nature, CO<sub>2</sub> exist either as free CO<sub>2</sub> or in combination in carbonate form. The source of CO<sub>2</sub> is mainly from the complete combustion of carbonaceous fuel such as coal, coke, fuel oil, gasoline and cooking gas that were part of human daily activities.

CO<sub>2</sub> is colourless, odourless and tasteless. It does not burn since it is the product of combustion and a very stable compound that make it inert under normal condition towards any reaction. It is also nontoxic compared to carbon monoxide gas. However, if being inhaled in large amount up to 30 %, it could lead to death due suffocation (Aerias, 2005). It is fairly soluble in water and form carbonic acid when dissolved. At very high temperature, CO<sub>2</sub> can decompose into carbon and oxygen.

CO<sub>2</sub> plays an important role in maintaining the biological and ecological system on earth. CO<sub>2</sub> is considered as an important gradient of carbon cycle since it can be produced from human and animal respiration systems and then being used by plants for photosynthesis process. Photosynthesis process that utilized CO<sub>2</sub> for food production for the plant later releasing the oxygen gas for human and animal respiratory systems. However, the abundance of CO<sub>2</sub> due to other sources disturbs the balance of this cycle and lead to environmental pollution.

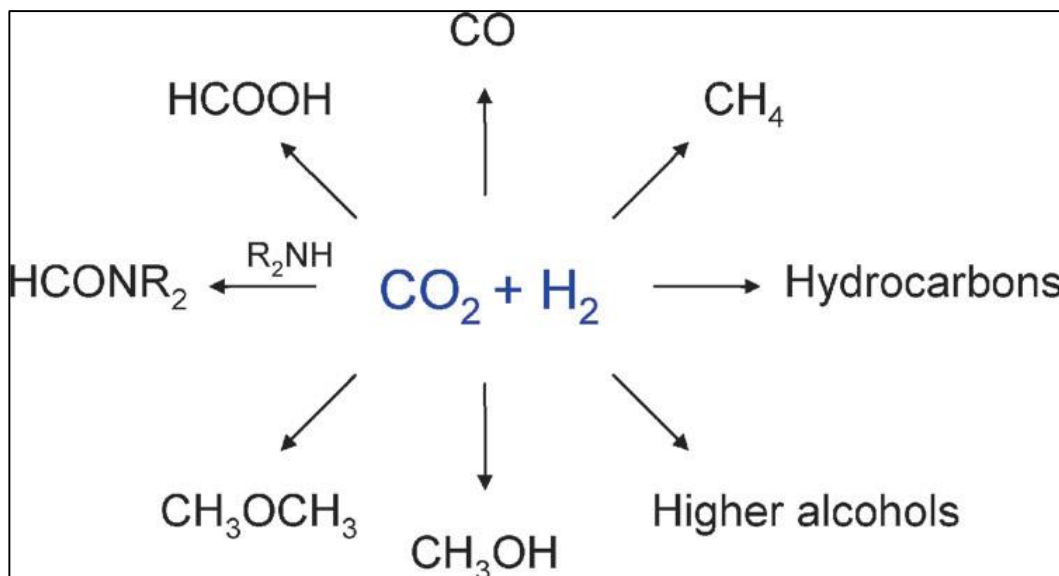
Before Industrial Revolution in 1760, the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> was oscillating between 180-280 parts per million (ppm) for over thousands years. The concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> has been steadily increased to above 280 ppm since then as shown in **Figure 1.3** and in December 2014, the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration reached 398.78 ppm (NOAA-ESRL, 2015) .The reduction of green plants due to deforestation worldwide decreased the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> absorb by the plant.



**Figure 1.3:** CO<sub>2</sub> level trending form year 1000-2000 (CDIAC 2015)

The utilization of CO<sub>2</sub> by conversion into more valuable chemicals becomes a good choice due to the abundant amount of the CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere which ensures a good source for feedstock. CO<sub>2</sub> can become the source for both carbon and oxygen

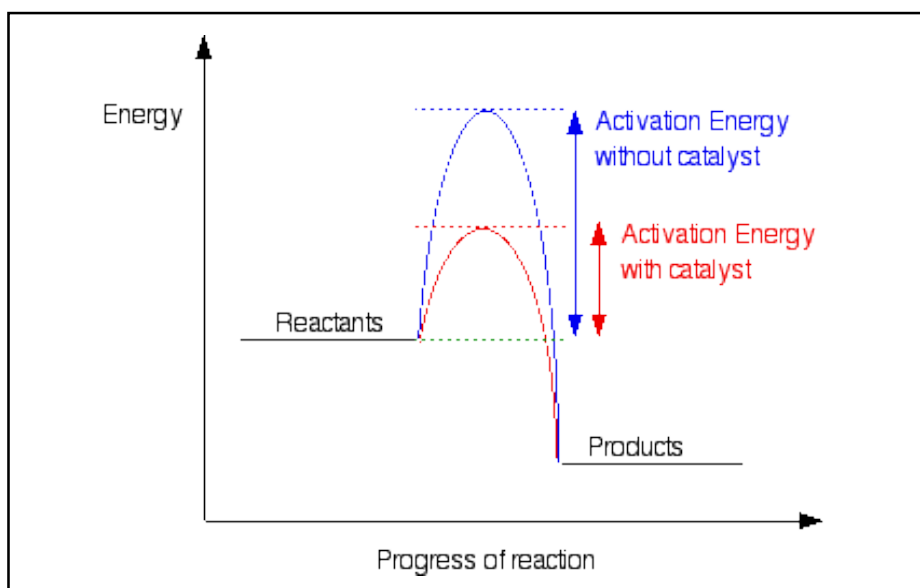
for various types of chemical group, including alkane, alkene, alcohol, carboxylic acid and other complex chemicals as shown in **Figure 1.4**. CO<sub>2</sub> conversion basically involves the reduction or hydrogenation process where the reactant with hydrogen component such hydrogen gas or methane normally used to react with CO<sub>2</sub>.



**Figure 1.4:** Hydrogenation reaction for CO<sub>2</sub> (Wang et al. 2011).

### 1.3 Catalysis

One of the most important component in organic and inorganic processes nowadays is the catalyst. Catalyst is a substance that is used for the reaction but remain the same as before the reactions. As shown in **Figure 1.5**, catalysts play an important role in providing an alternative route for the reaction that used lower activation energy of a single elementary step which either accelerate the chemical reaction or reduce the reaction temperature and pressure.



**Figure 1.5:** Reaction pathway for catalysed and un-catalysed reactions.

There are two types of catalyst which are homogeneous (same phase as the reactant) and heterogeneous (different phase as the reactant). Around 90% of chemical processes use heterogeneous catalysts including chemicals, food, pharmaceutical, automobile, petrochemical industries and more modern fields such as nanotechnology and biotechnology. Heterogeneous catalyst is widely used due to the fact that the catalyst and the reaction production can be separated easily compared to homogeneous catalyst.